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RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU PRIORITY 2165  
RUEHGZ/AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU PRIORITY 0616  
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY 8674  
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI PRIORITY 1431  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 002406

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/26/2032

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SUBJECT: AIT DIRECTOR'S LUNCH WITH JAPANESE REPRESENTATIVE  
IKEDA

Classified By: AIT Director Stephen M. Young. Reason(s):  
1.4 (B/D)

¶1. (C) Summary. During an October 25 lunch with my counterpart, Japanese Rep Tadashi Ikeda, he reported on an October 19 dinner with President Chen Shui-bian and an upcoming visit to Japan by KMT presidential candidate Ma Ying-jeou. Ikeda also made it clear that while Japan will maintain nominal neutrality over Taiwan's presidential contest, its sentiments were more with the DPP and Frank Hsieh, for both personal and historical reasons. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Ikeda had dinner at President Chen's house last Friday. He had underscored the closely complementary views of the U.S. and Japan in opposing the DPP's UN referendum, despite Tokyo's preference not to highlight the fact publicly. Taiwan should not try to read any gap in our slightly different tactical approaches. In response, Chen promised not to make any public claims that somehow Japan is pulling its punches on this issue. Ikeda asked Chen to explain his "four noes" statement in 2000. Chen said this was reached after consultations with the USG, deliberations within the DPP and academic circles here, and following indirect communications with the mainland. Chen admitted that he drafted his inauguration remarks himself (note: putting to the lie recurring hints that somehow the text had been dictated by Washington). In a separate conversation, Ikeda asked Vice Premier Chiou I-ren whether DPP candidate Frank Hsieh would reiterate Chen's "four noes" if elected. Chiou suggested he would not, but that he would most likely make some similar pledges not to unilaterally change the status quo.

¶3. (C) Ikeda reported that Ma Ying'-jeou's camp has begun negotiating with the Japanese the parameters for an upcoming visit to Tokyo and Osaka. The KMT would like the Japanese to set up their official program, since (unlike in Washington) they do not have a party office there and do not want to request assistance from the Taiwan representative office. The Japanese, for their part, want to put the onus on Ma's people to do this. The compromise, thus far, is to put the request to an office in the Japanese Diet which regularly handles programs of this sort (note: unclear if this was just for Japanese parliamentarians or more broadly). Ikeda

admitted Ma had made a poor impression during an earlier visit to Japan, and would no doubt be sharply questioned during the trip regarding the KMT's attitude toward China and defense issues.

14. (C) Ikeda took note of the U.S. position that we would remain neutral in upcoming Taiwan presidential elections. While this was Tokyo's formal position as well, he proceeded to tell me that historically his government has not been well disposed toward the KMT. He admitted the fact that Frank Hsieh studied at Kyoto University made Japan more favorably disposed to him than toward Ma Ying-jeou. But in a deeper sense this goes back to the Chiang Kai-shek era, when the KMT displayed great hostility to Japan both for its aggression on the mainland during WWII, as well as its allegedly harsh occupation of Taiwan from 1845 to 1945. For example, KMT era Taiwan textbooks routinely portrayed the colonial era as "the cruel 50 year," and exaggerated what Ikeda claimed were only on the order of 20-30,000 executions of Taiwan citizens by several magnitudes of order, claiming that 600,000 Taiwanese had been murdered by the Japanese. In contrast, with the rise of the DPP, textbooks here were considerably amended over the past ten years to portray the colonial era in a more favorable light. In sum, Ikeda made it clear his country would prefer a DPP victory, though reaffirming that it would not actually comment publicly about the candidates.

Comment

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15. (C) Ikeda is a good contact, and an experienced Sinologist. I was struck by the sharpness of his disparaging description of Japanese attitudes toward the KMT, as if

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long-festering emotions lay just under the surface of his seemingly dispassionate analysis.

YOUNG